

Minutes of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices.

The meeting was called to order at 5 PM on Thursday, March 5, 2008 in the Board Room of the DPW at 125 Locust St., Northampton. Present were Jim Palermo, Lisa DePiano, Bob Reckman, Wendy Foxmyn, David Narkewicz, Michael Bardsley, Alex Ghiselin.

The meeting was taped by NCTV for future broadcast.

There were 5 members of the public present.

Jim Dostal introduced Mr. Graham King, who is interested in serving as an intern for the committee. The committee got a copy of Mr. King's resume.

The committee discussed how it will be organized. Lisa DePiano and Jim Palermo were elected co-chairs of the committee. The committee decided that our next meeting will be at 6 PM on March 14 in location to be determined by the co-chairs. The goal will be to find locations that allow live cable broadcast and that are accessible to the public. The committee members will e-mail their availability to the co-chairs so that a regular meeting schedule can be established.

The committee discussed the following items for their agenda:

- Talk to Mr. King about being our intern.
- Creation of a mission statement and plan of action.
- How does the open meeting law apply to our activities and how can we communicate without violating its requirements. We can ask Cynthia Pepyne to come to speak to us.
- The possibility of creating a Google users group like the one that was created for Pulaski Park. We need to find out if this will allow the members to communicate among themselves and with the public without violating the open meeting law.
- How and when do we do outreach to the public?
- How do we relate to the media?
- What rules will we use to run our meetings?
- We need to remember that citizen participation is a key component of "best practices".
- What subcommittees will be established and when?

The committee agreed that the co-chairs will collaborate on a draft mission statement and a plan of action that they will distribute electronically to the other member of the committee. Members understand that they cannot reply to the substance of the document but must wait until the next meeting to discuss the substance of the document. The co-chairs will also send the draft document to the committee members as an attachment so that they can easily download it. The draft will also be posted on the best practices section of the City's web site along with these minutes.

The committee agreed that we will use Robert's Rules of Order for the first two meetings. Wendy Foxmyn and David Narkewicz will work together to investigate other options for

running our meetings. They will communicate their findings to the rest of the committee. They may choose to do this before our next meeting and the committee members are allowed to respond because this is a procedural rather than a substantive question.

Bob Reckman will talk to Cynthia Pepyne to see if can come to our next meeting to discuss the open meeting law. He will also ask her, if she cannot come, how the open meeting law applies to our committee's work and if a Google users group will violate the open meeting law. The committee will make a decision on the Google User's group at our next meeting based on Reckman's report of the conversation.

The committee agreed that our media spokespeople are the co-chairs.

The committee heard from Mr. King about his interests and background. The committee voted to gratefully accept Mr. King's services. He will take the minutes of our future meetings and post them on the City's web site. He is also willing to do whatever else the committee needs, which may be a lot.

The committee adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Reckman